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April 22, 2008

Honorable Condoleezza Rice, Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street NW.
Washington DC, 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I recently returned from an emergency trip to Haiti on April 20-21 where I had the opportunity to meet with President Rene Préval, Ambassador Janet Sanderson, business leaders, and representatives from humanitarian and development organizations on the ground in Haiti. President Préval and I discussed the rising cost of food and ways to provide humanitarian assistance to the Haitian people. After my trip, I can attest to the fact that food is getting to the island nation, but it is too expensive for most Haitians, roughly 80% of who live on less than \$2 per day.

Soaring food prices in Haiti and the ensuing unrest is a significant setback for our neighbor in its quest for economic, political, and social stability. Haiti has been making substantial progress over the past three to four years as evident by the growth in jobs and foreign investment. Recent events, if not dealt with in a manner that meets the needs of the people, will serve to undo that progress.

Of utmost importance is that Haiti receives direct monetary and humanitarian assistance from the United States and the international community. It is my profound hope that the island nation be given special consideration as your administrators parcel out the \$200 million in aid money, and that Haiti receive at least \$15 million in direct monetary assistance. Additional aid from the Emerson Trust in the form of wheat and other essential food commodities are needed too. President Préval has determined that over the next six months, Haiti requires: 30,000 metric tons of rice (4 percent broken quality) per month; 15,000 metric tons of wheat per month; and 7,000 tons of cooking oil per month.

It continues to be in the United States' best interests, both morally and financially, to do all that we can help our neighbor to thrive. Madame Secretary, I thank you for

your kind consideration and look forward to working with you on a long-term solution to Haiti's challenging problems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kendrick B. Meek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KENDRICK B. MEEK
Member of Congress